



Federal Policy Priorities FY2012

The Campaign for Tomorrow's Workforce (CTW) is a coalition of over 40 New York-based organizations dedicated to reconnecting young adults to education and career opportunities. Currently, over 350,000 young people in the State of New York ages 16 to 24 are neither in school nor working. Considerable research tells us that individuals who do not have productive work experience by the age of 25 have significantly decreased chances of economic success in their lifetime. At a time of declining local and state revenues, federal investments are needed to ensure New York's youth and young adults have opportunities to develop skills, earn credentials and gain essential work experiences. CTW offers the following agenda for placing New York's future workforce on a successful path to labor market participation.

Budget Priorities

Reauthorize and Fully Fund *Workforce Investment Act* (WIA) Programs

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) and NYC's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) utilize WIA funding to offer disconnected youth occupational skills training, assistance with job and college placement, GED preparation, paid internships, guidance and career counseling, youth employment and adult education programming. These critical opportunities empower NYC's youth to gain the credentials and work experiences necessary to enter the workforce. As such, CTW supports the President's \$923.9 million funding request for WIA Youth Education & Training.

Further, in response to the Senate HELP Committee WIA reauthorization discussion draft, CTW supports the reauthorization of the WIA with the following modifications: expand income eligibility to at least 150% of FPL, adopt literacy and numeracy common measures, adopt interim performance measures that reflect education gain, include new Youth Innovation and Replication Grants, modify Title II state formulas to reflect 16-24 year old population, modify OSY definition to exclude secondary credential-holders, and designate 60% of youth funding to support out of school youth¹.

Maintain Full *Community Service Block Grant* (CSBG) Funding

Currently New York City receives approximately \$32 million in CSBG funding annually. These dollars are utilized by DYCD to support the city's Neighborhood Development Areas (NDA). DYCD provides a range of services within these targeted low-income neighborhoods, including youth employment, literacy, GED, and English classes for youth and young adults. CTW opposes any reductions to CSBG funding levels.

Restore Funding for *YouthBuild*

YouthBuild is a comprehensive education and training program administered by the US Department of Labor (DOL) where youth work towards obtaining their high school diploma or GED while gaining practical job and leadership skills by building affordable housing in their communities. CTW supports the President's request for \$115 million in FY2012 funding for YouthBuild.

¹ Full recommendations available as "*CTW WIA Reauthorization Recommendations*" on www.campaignfortomorrowsworkforce.org

Restore Funding for *Corporation for National and Community Service Programs* (CNCS)

CNCS is a federal agency that leverages billions of hours of volunteer time to serve communities across the country. In New York, over 34,000 Senior Corps and AmeriCorps volunteers tutor and mentor special need and disadvantaged children and youth, provide literacy assistance, improve health services and expand housing opportunities. Volunteer service provides an opportunity for young adults to gain work experience while improving their communities, a strategy that CTW supports expanding to re-engage larger numbers of disadvantaged youth. In addition, through its Social Innovation Fund, CNCS awarded the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC \$5.7 million in 2010 to expand and replicate successful Center for Economic Opportunities (CEO) anti-poverty programs. This expansion included the Young Adult Internship program (YAIP). YAIP provides paid internships, education and training opportunities, job placements and follow up services for NYC youth aged 16-24 who are not in school and not working. CTW supports the President's CNCS FY2012 budget request of \$1.26 billion, reversing millions of dollars of FY2011 cuts.

Pass and Fully Fund the *American Jobs Act* (AJA)

The American Jobs Act aims to both reduce taxes on small businesses and individuals, as well as stimulate job creation and hiring across the public and private sectors. AJA includes a \$5 billion *Pathways Back to Work Fund* to expand employment opportunities for low-income youth and adults. The administration estimates that in New York, this investment could create 7,900 jobs for adults and 31,600 summer and year-round jobs for youth. CTW supports this needed investment.

Legislative Priorities

Pass the *Reengaging Americans in Serious Education by United Programs Act* (RAISE UP)

The RAISE UP Act would provide federal funding to develop community partnerships of education, workforce and youth service systems. These partnerships would design and implement strategies for identifying and supporting disconnected youth, with an emphasis on assisting them to obtain secondary and post-secondary credentials. The strategy would also identify means for helping disconnected youth obtain and succeed in "family supporting careers." With nearly 30% of New York students not completing high school, CTW supports the passage of this legislation and believes these community partnerships would not only benefit New York's large disconnected youth population, but also complement NYC Workforce Cabinet efforts to better coordinate the City's workforce development system.

Pass the *Saving America's Youth: the Youth Employment Act of 2011* (SAY YEA)

SAY YEA is designed to utilize both direct funding and tax break incentives to create summer jobs for disconnected youth, state employment programs, on-the-job-training opportunities and a national public service employment program. In light of the dangerously high 16% unemployment rate for youth aged 16-24 across the state and the decline in City and State support for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), CTW supports the passage of this urgently needed and targeted job-creation bill.

Pass the *Urban Jobs Act*

The Urban Jobs Act is designed to alleviate high rates of youth incarceration, particularly among minorities. It would provide \$200 million over five years to national nonprofits to provide job training, education and support services to 18-24 year old young adults who are out of school or involved in the criminal justice system. As recognized by the recent NYC Mayoral launch of the Young Men's Initiative (YMI), the challenges facing New York City black and Latino young men including poverty, unemployment, incarceration and disconnection, require special attention and resources. As such, CTW supports the passage of the Urban Jobs Act.

CTW is coordinated by the Community Services Society (CSS), Neighborhood Family Services Coalition (NFSC), and United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). For more information, contact Lazar Treschan: 212-614-5396, ltreschan@cssny.org; Sierra Stoneman-Bell: 212-619-1666, sierra@nfsc-nyc.org; or Kevin Douglas: 212-967-0322 x345, kdouglas@unhny.org.
www.campaignfortomorrowworkforce.org